

THE MARQUEE

A Publication
of the
Association of
Kansas
Theatre

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER, 1994

817 W. 6TH ST. TOPEKA, KANSAS 66603 • 800-343-2779

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 5

Convention '95

Plans are almost complete for Convention '95 in Salina Feb. 16-19, which this year is being chaired by Susan Sutton of Concordia and hosted by Salina Community Theatre.

Through the generosity of Southwestern Bell's Arts in Excellence program, AKT this year can offer mini-grants in the amount of \$250 to each of the first eight theatre groups to sign up to bring productions for AACT/FEST to the convention. The grants will help groups defray some of the costs involved in participating (see form elsewhere in the newsletter). It is hoped that AKT will have the privilege of dispersing the entire \$2,000 set aside for this purpose and production participation will be better than ever. AACT/FEST entries *must be received at the AKT Central Office, 817 SW 6th, Topeka, KS 66603*, by the close of business on November 10.

"We just want their entries by November 10th," said Wall. "It is not paramount that they have a title at that time, but it is important that we know they are bringing a production."

If there are any questions regarding AACT/FEST regulations and guidelines for entries, persons are asked to call Sue Sutton at 913-243-1435, or address questions to the central office and they will be forwarded to Sue.

Deb Wall reports that a block of rooms has been

set aside at Salina's Holidome, 1616 W. Crawford, for conventioners at a special rate of \$57 per double room. The number to call for room reservations is 913-823-1739. To help keep costs down, conventioners will be on their own for lunch and dinner on Friday and Saturday. The only meal for which attendees will have to plan for that's directly part of the convention will be the Sunday banquet. Cost of that event has yet to be determined. Wall said. "But we're going to keep it affordable," she added.

Wall said all workshops will be held in the Holidome. The Afterglows following the evening performances on Friday and Saturday also will be at the Holidome.

Wall said the seating capacity of SCT is 325 and ticket prices will be \$6 per person for each block of performances. There will be two shows Friday afternoon and Friday evening, Saturday afternoon and Saturday evening. "At this stage this schedule presumes we will have at least the eight entries," Wall said.

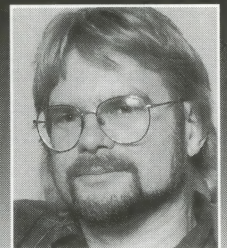
"We're going to have fun," said Wall. She said she is working with the Salina Chamber of Commerce and other events that involved good food and good talk are in the offing. More about the convention will be in the next newsletter.

out of her home in Pittsburg, Penn., on a number of theatre projects.

Before joining the Missouri Rep, Guaraldi served as literary manager at the Pittsburgh Public Theatre. She has directed in New York, Florida and New Jersey and other locales.

At the convention, Guaraldi will present a workshop entitled, "Working With New Playwrights."

From Ric



We have a new mission statement, developed at this summer's board retreat in Chanute with the assistance of Dorothy Ilgen, Executive Director of the Kansas Arts Commission.

The new statement reads as follows:

"To provide information, technical assistance and professional development opportunities to the theatre artists, organizations, educational communities and citizens in order to promote and perpetuate the highest quality of theatre in Kansas."

If any of the above goals, etc., are not happening for you in relation to AKT, please contact me or one of the board members. This must be a member-driven organization. You can **ONLY** get out of it what you are willing to put in.

The main thrust of this year's activities will be the AACT/FEST Convention. We've completely reorganized this into a weekend celebration of theatre. We hope to have up to eight community theatres compete. The carrot at the end of the stick? A \$250 mini-grant will be given to the first eight theatres that apply to participate. This money will help theatres with travel and lodging costs for their attendance at the convention.

My dream is to see a huge convention of active participants—actors from the shows attending other shows and workshop and committee events. We have the possibility of huge growth this year but we need all of you to come along and play and bring a few friends!

Looking forward to hearing from you and to seeing you all at Convention '95 in Salina.

Ric Averill

Convention adjudicators

Adjudicators for Convention '95 in Salina this coming February are Mary Guaraldi, Dan Sullivan and Patt Ward-Curtin.

Each of the adjudicators, as well as AKT board member Tony Naylor, will facilitate workshops at the convention.

Guaraldi served as respondent for Convention '94 and is currently dividing her time as Associate Artistic Director and Director of Playwright's Stage for the Missouri Repertory Theatre. She is also working

Continued Page 3

New Members on AKT Board

Since publication of the last newsletter, AKT's board of directors has been strengthened with the addition of two new members. They are **Michael J. Byington**, an instructional consultant with the Kansas Deaf-Blind Program, an affiliate of the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf/Blind Youths and Adults, and **Sharon Treaster**, assistant superintendent of schools for USD 466 in Scott City.

Michael, a resident of Topeka, advocates at the legislative level in behalf of visually and hearing impaired. His current duties with the Kansas Deaf-Blind Program include direct teaching of orientation, mobility, leisure time activities, independent living skills and communications skills to persons who are both hearing and visually impaired.

In July, Michael was a presenter at the "Access to the Arts" six-state conference hosted by the Mid America Arts Alliance and National Endowment for the Arts at the Johnson County Community College. His presentation was both forceful and enlightening concerning what is being done and what can be done in the area of visual and performing arts for the benefit of

visually and hearing impaired.

Michael's direct connection to the theatrical arts has been ongoing for many years. More specific examples of his involvement are his stint as an instructor of theatre arts for handicapped adults for KAC's Big Lakes Project in 1976 and in 1990 as an adjunct instructor of theatre for Washburn University in which he taught a course titled, "Creative Arts Therapies."

He has a master's degree in speech/Theatre Communications from Kansas State University where he also received his B.S.E. in Speech and Psychology Education in 1975. He is a 1972 graduate of Wichita's Southeast High School.

Sharon, by her own admission, is a "ham" at heart, even though her career track has led her into the field of teaching and administration at the secondary level. A language (English/Spanish) graduate of Wichita State University, Sharon also received her master's degree in Spanish from WSU and taught Spanish and French in the Beloit area for many years. In addition to fulfilling her duties at her new job as assistant superintendent of Scott City schools, she has completed the course work toward her doctorate in

school finance and looks toward completing the work for her Ph.D. within two years. For persons with a lesser energy level, this would seem a daunting task, considering Sharon's job involves being in charge of the district's transportation, facilities, Quality Performance Accreditation and curriculum.

A native of Wichita, Sharon became involved in theatre productions while attending school and was never totally able to wash off the grease paint. She has over the years remained involved in theatre.

"I have always kept my interest in theatrical happenings," she said. "For years I directed the plays at Beloit High School and was a forensics coach." She also has written various skits and monologues and performed for clubs, schools and Chautauquas. "Once a ham, always a ham," she said.

The mother of four sons, Sharon's permanent residence is in the Beloit area where she says her "long suffering" husband has the privilege of her company "on weekends." She explained it is not easy, at first, to find jobs in educational administration and "you have to go where the jobs are located."

Theatre Academy gives North Central Kansas students real-world experience

North Central Kansas high school and college students took part in the 5th Annual Theatre Academy June 11-18 in a joint effort of Cloud County Community College and Brown Grand Theatre in Concordia.

The Academy, a three-year recipient of the Jacob Javits Gifted Grant, received additional support this year from the Southwestern Bell Arts in Excellence program.

Susan Sutton, AKT board member and chair of Convention '95, is the founder of the Academy. She also is Director of Humanities at Cloud County Community College.

Sue reported this year's week-long acting/play-writing workshop culminated in the production of an original children's show, "The Last Circus on Earth." The play was written by the participants under the

direction of AKT President Ric Averill. Averill, a Lawrence resident, is a children's playwright and founder of the Seem-to-be-Players company.

The play evolved as a result of Shakespearean scene work done by the students. Finding timely comic situations in a number of the scenes, students helped develop a modern day script containing many of the same classic plot and character developments found in Shakespeare's original works. Holly Andrews, AKT student representative at large and a five-year academy participant, served as administrative aide.

Once scripted, the play was directed by Max Vogler, an actor from Barnes, Kans., and now working in Boulder, Colo. The play was presented for the public in the Brown Grand Theatre on the final day of the event.

Something "Warm and Fizzy"

"Watching the Apple Valley Players is like drinking a can of root beer that sat outside through a summer afternoon. Warm fizzy sweetness overpowers the sense. One can only gulp and grin, and say, 'Finally, it's summertime.'"

If the above leaves you scratching your head and wondering, it is perhaps sufficient to explain that was the opening of a rave review for "Bootleg Baby", a melodrama by Ric and Will Averill and Beth Dearing. According to the review by Topeka Capital-Journal's Neda Ulaby, the production of the Ric Averill Players played to a packed opening night house at Ozawie's Apple Valley Farm near Topeka in June.

The reviewer found little fault with any of the cast's performance and noted, "Will Averill is probably the most darling 'hit man' ever to grace a stage."

Director's report

For a very brief time many years ago I was involved with Houston Music Theatre, an in-the-round house of some thirty-five hundred seats, as director of public relations and pusher of advance ticket sales. I hadn't a clue what to do; but somehow we got good press and folks—some of them, anyway—bought tickets early. They had good reason to do so. We had such productions as "Showboat," "A Funny Thing Happened...," "Westside Story," and others that 30 years later don't come immediately to mind. Liberace came there for a week's stint, too, with surprising results.

I became enthralled by show people. Until then I had been a budding journalist and had met many of the newsmakers of the early '60s when they came to the Big City on Buffalo Bayou: John Kennedy (then a senator); Werner VonBraun (literally a rocket scientist); Texas' own Lyndon Johnson (who on the wings of tragedy would carry the Lone Star flag into the White House); and persons of lesser renown whose fame was more Texas than U.S.

But at HMT it was my privilege to get to know more casually and intimately such stars as Mickey Rooney (A Funny Thing, etc.), John Raitt (Showboat) and Annamarie Albergetti (Westside). And, of course, Liberace, a premier entertainer who brought his gentle, sometimes melancholy, sometimes humorous, sometimes exhilarating, sometimes inspirational production into a land identified with oil, cattle, cotton, shipping, and bigness. A tough, masculine city and not a place where one as theatrically unlearned as myself would believe an audience could be mustered that would appreciate Liberace's gaudy, effeminate style. He wowed 'em. Night after night he performed before homogeneous SRO audiences, and he wowed 'em.

Juliett Prowse was there, too, for a couple of weeks. I recall standing at the door of the rehearsal

room and watching in amazement her casual display of agility and grace. She glided with sleek, sensuous, elegant ease through intricate dance routines that seemed for her effortless in execution. It was only because I was up close that I could see the perspiration and the occasional little tics around the mouth and eyes that contradicted both the illusion of effortless-ness and the adequacy of the theatre's air conditioning system. It was work, real work, a professional at work. And quite suddenly, even though unable to articulate the thought then, or even now, came the awareness that artistic creativity is infinite in its depth and breadth for those in the spotlight or behind it.

In the composite of all those fleeting acquaintances and others made then and since I have come to appreciate the gift some have that can turn a darkened hall into a magical place of light and enlightenment. I believe such a gift is also a demanding and an irresistible force making those blest with it totally immune to the workaday boundaries which constrain most of us. It was a personal awakening, a sudden comprehension immense and humbling in its impact.

Now many years later you have afforded me the opportunity to at least again touch a world peopled by creative folks whose lives are at least in part dedicated to the theatre. I am by nature often dour of countenance and businesslike in demeanor. I am mostly, I suppose, motivated more by messages from the left side of my brain than my right, and sometimes slow and even befuddled in understanding the free flow creative process of those in the theatrical world. But, because of that awakening so many years ago, I consider it a rare privilege to be able to serve as your association director and the collective creativity incorporate in the concept of AKT.

—Bill Stinchcomb

Theatre In Our Schools Month

By Trish McIntire

This March's celebration of Theatre In Our Schools Month was a wonderful success.

As always, Kansas theatre people outdid themselves in bringing attention to the role of theatre in education. Statewide, twice as much material was distributed to even more participants. Local celebrations continued the traditions established in previous years with some wonderful new ideas. Besides the use of national materials, educators found wonderful new ways to highlight drama in education.

One project was partially funded by a grant from the Kansas Arts Commission. Another school opened their drama classes to the study hall students. A common trend was the merging of theatre with the other arts in school-wide festivals. Of all the celebrations reported, more than 10,000 students, teachers, parents and others took part.

A major change is happening in Kansas TIOSM. After three years as state chairperson, I am stepping down. Phil Kinen is taking over the position. I have enjoyed my tenure and hope I have made a contribution to a project I feel very strongly about. I know Phil will expand the celebration from the base that has been established. Thank you, all.

Note: Both Trish McIntire, Arkansas City, and Phil Kinen, Kansas City, are members of AKT's Board of Directors.

Continued from cover

Convention Adjudicators

Sullivan is a former drama critic of the New York Times and more recently the Los Angeles Times. He currently is living in Minneapolis and completing a biography on William Inge and teaching at the University of Minnesota. Sullivan's wife Faith is also a writer and is the author of the highly acclaimed novel, *The Cape Ann*. His workshop at convention is titled, "Writing About the Arts: The Regional Voice of William Inge."

Ward-Curtin is the community theatre director in the small town of Watonga, Okla. Her group won fourth place in their latest AACT/FEST entry, *Waiting for the Parade*. It was the only such production to

receive an international bid.

When not teaching, Ward-Curtin guest directs and speaks on a wide variety of theatre-related topics. Her workshop at convention, "The Audition Process: New Wrinkles in Directing," will be of considerable interest to both actors and directors.

Naylor, sceneographer for Washburn University Theatre, will present a workshop entitled "Stage Painting Techniques."

Convention Chair Sue Sutton noted that none of the workshops will be held at times conflicting with productions.

**DON'T FORGET TO
RENEW YOUR
AKT
MEMBERSHIP.**

See page 7, or call
1-800-343-2779 for details.

Kansas Theatre &

October

1, Saturday

First Annual Columbian Antique Benefit Auction

Columbian Theatre, Wamego, Kansas 913-456-2029

Proceeds help to support children's programming at the Columbian.

1, Saturday

"Harvey"

Salina Community Theatre, Salina, Kansas 913-827-6126

By Mary Chase

1 & 2, Saturday and Sunday

"Swan Lake"

Century II Concert Hall, Wichita, Kansas 316-643-ARTS

choreographed by Erik Bruhn and performed by the National Ballet of Canada.

1 & 2, Saturday and Sunday

6,7,8,9 Thursday thru Sunday

"Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat"

Lawrence Community Theatre, Lawrence, Kansas 913-843-7469

By Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice

8, Saturday-3PM

"Merlin and the Color Magic"

The Brown Grand Theatre, Concordia, Kansas 913-243-2553

By T. Daniel Mime

20-22, Thursday thru Saturday—8PM

"U.S.A."

Cloud Count Community College Department of Theatre

The Brown Grand Theatre, Concordia, Kansas 913-243-2553

By John Dos Passos & Paul Shyre

23, Sunday-3PM

Dennis Gaines, "Cowboy Poet"

The Brown Grand Theatre, Concordia, Kansas 913-243-2553

28-30, Friday thru Sunday

1994 Region V Conference in Minneapolis

Park Inn Hotel—Minneapolis, Minnesota 612-332-0371

Events Calendar

OCTOBER CONTINUED

October 29, Saturday

Celebrate Wamego-Glotzabach Family Trio
Columbian Theatre, Wamego, Kansas 913-456-2029
Artist Exhibition and Mini-performances all day
Glotzabach Family Trio Performance 7PM

N o v e m b e r

4, Friday-8PM **Sold Out**
5, Saturday-2PM (matinee)
5, Saturday-8PM

Columbian Premier Featuring Jazz Singer-Marilyn May
Columbian Theatre, Wamego, Kansas 913-456-2029

5, Saturday-3PM

"Beauty and the Beast", Morning Star Puppet Theatre
The Brown Grand Theatre, Concordia, Kansas 913-243-2553

10 & 11, Thursday and Friday-7PM

"Trickster Tales From The Melting Pot"
Columbian Theatre, Wamego, Kansas 913-456-2029
Seem-To-Be Players

11-13 & 15-20, Friday thru Sunday

"Greater Tuna"
Salina Community Theatre, Salina, Kansas 913-827-6126
By Jaston Williams, Joe Sears and Ed Howard

12, Saturday-9AM to 4PM

Historic Home Tour at the Columbian Theatre
Columbian Theatre, Wamego, Kansas 913-456-2029
Make-it and Take-it Children's Craft Workshop

18, Friday-6:30PM-Workshop-7:30PM Performance

KTPK Eagle Ridge Band
Columbian Theatre, Wamego, Kansas 913-456-2029
Country Line-Dance Workshop and Performance

Please be sure to send us your theatre schedules for inclusion in the calendar.

The Columbian Art Center makes a comeback



The Columbian is centrally located in downtown Wamego in the 500 block of Lincoln.

On October 22, the curtain will rise for a special members' preview of Wamego's Columbian Theatre. And right in keeping with the original planning will be the restored theatre's grand opening premier weekend Nov. 4-5. Featured performer will be Marilyn Maye, a singer of jazz of national renown.

"It's going to be exciting," said our own Linda Haynes Uthoff, AKT board member and Artistic Director for The Columbian Museum and Art Center—which is the official name of

the community developed and supported \$3 million project sited on Wamego's main street at 521 Lincoln.

When those first visitors enter the restored, century-old Rogers Building (which had been mostly dusty and vacant since last used as a movie house in the 1950's), the full magnificence of what once was will be felt again. But with the addition of many high-tech theatre innovations unobtrusively woven into the overall feel of the 19th Century theatre.

Centerpiece of the project will be the six huge (11-foot by 16-foot) mural oil paintings that first were viewed by visitors to the 1893 Chicago Worlds Fair. J.C. Rogers bought the paintings after the fair closed and brought them to Wamego for display in the building he built for his mercantile business and to house The Rogers Hall, which later became The Columbian when a stage was added on the building's second floor. Then, as it will be now, a hundred years later, the building will serve a multiple purpose—a museum, a cultural arts exhibition and learning center, a facility for meetings and seminars, and, of course, theatre.

Founders of the project estimate the Columbian will annually

attract 100,000 visitors to Wamego. They base that on documentable proof that the city's historic Dutch Mill, located a short distance away in a public park, has 25,000 names signed in its visitor registry each year. Terry Thibodeau, development director of the non-profit Columbian Theatre Foundation, said the real strength of the Columbian concept is flexibility and availability. She said the facility will be open seven days a week. Indeed, the Columbian is already ready for the anticipated tourists with Debbie Dyer, manager of tourism, ready to book visits and tours.

"Theatre is really the heart and soul of the Columbian," said Linda, adding the community-based restoration project is one of nearly 20 taking place in Kansas. Linda's husband John, a skilled theatre technician, is also involved in planning and supervising the theatre's lighting, sound and so on.

Even though Wamego is a small community of some 4,000 residents and located only 15 miles west of Manhattan and 40 miles east of Topeka, Linda feels the city and communities nearby have talent in abundance to form a community theatre. She also feels because of its location the theatre can bring productions to Wamego that will attract attendance.

Left to Right:

Debbie Dyer,
Tourism Director,
Terry Thibodeau,
Executive Director, and
Linda Haynes-Uthoff,
Artistic Director



For Sale

A complete set of Audrey II Plants for the musical "Little Shop Of Horrors" Excellent condition.

Features include: 12' Arms and moving lips.

Interested parties can contact:

Lara 913-456-7490.

*It's sort-of-a classic actor meets actress who
knows a director who lunches with
the producer theme...
but, with a kinda
Midwestern
theatrical
flair.*

*You're invited to join
the Association of
Kansas Theatre.*

Don't forget to renew your AKT Membership.

This year's theme is "Revive in '95" and AKT will be growing by leaps and bounds.

Renew your membership today and be a part of the exciting new programs and activities AKT will be coordinating this year:

Memberships have been revised somewhat from last year. Pick the one (or ones) that fit you or your organization best and return the form below.

AKT's mission is: *"To provide information, technical assistance and professional development
opportunities to theatre artists, organizations, educational communities and citizens in
order to promote and perpetuate the highest quality of theatre in Kansas."*

Only through a strong membership can the above mission be carried out.

☒ New Member

☒ Renewal Member

AKT Membership Application

AKT Central Office
1-800-343-2779

Name _____

Organization _____

Street _____

Bus. Phone () _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Res. Phone () _____

☐ Student Member - \$15

☐ Individual Member - \$35

☐ Contributing Member - (min. \$100)

☐ Organizational Member - \$60 (includes 2 representatives + 3 students)

☐ Organizational Team Member - \$200 (includes up to 8 representatives + 3 students)

Categories of Membership

Send application and
payment to:

AKT Central Office
817 W 6th street
Topeka, KS 66603

Theatre Workshops

Workshops will not
be held opposite
productions.

Writing About the Arts; "The Regional Voice of William Inge"

Presented by Dan Sullivan

Working with New Playwrights

Presented by Mary Guaraldi


The Audition Process; "New Wrinkles in Directing" (for actors and directors.)

Presented by Patt Ward-Curtin

Stage Painting Techniques

Presented by Tony Naylor

Auditions: Auditions for professional and college theatres will be held; a wide variety of booths; and much, much more. Don't miss out. Plan to attend.

Clip & Send 



Yes! Our group is interested in entering AACT Fest '95 (This entry form must be received by Nov. 10th)*
Each participating group will be eligible for a \$250 AKT mini-grant. *There will be a limit of 8 entries so, act quickly.*

Performing Group: _____

Production Title: _____

- A) Performing Groups must be members of AKT in order to participate.
- B) When all eight entries have been approved, a lottery will be held to determine the day and time for each performance.
- C) A \$35.00 entry fee will be collected at the time of entry to defray the expenses of the winning production at the Regional Competition.

*Send this entry form and \$35 entry fee payment to: Susan L. Sutton
AACT/Fest '95 Chair
c/o Cloud County Community College
2221 Campus Drive
Concordia, Kansas 66901

or

Call Susan directly at:
Office: 913-243-1435
Home: 913-243-7861

The Association
of Kansas Theatre
817 West Sixth
Topeka, KS 66603

BULK RATE
US Postage
PAID
Permit #721
Topeka, KS



JED DAVIS
2602 LOUISIANA
LAWRENCE KS 66046